

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL066
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Name of Service:	Little Angels Montessori School
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Address of Service:	Main Street, Mountcharles, Co. Donegal
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Eircode:	F94 YDE5
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Name of Registered Provider:	Linda Robinson
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	13/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	21	PM	
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
Inspection undertaken by:	S Killeen
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

Little Angels Montessori school is a privately owned preschool service with the capacity to accommodate 22 children. At present, the service provides sessional care for children aged between 2 and 6 years from Monday to Friday, 09:30am-12.30pm. The service participates on the Early Childhood Care and Education programme (ECCE). A school age service is also available.

Staffing

There are four staff working directly with the children on a daily basis, the registered provider and three employees. All staff hold a major award in early childhood care and education.

Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,23,25,26,27 and 28 These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,*
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and*

(d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(1)

The registered provider ensured that.

- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
- (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee.

(2)

On the day of inspection, four adults were present, the person in charge, three adults who were employed to work directly with the children.

The following vetting information was available for four adults:

- (a) six written validated references from past employers for four of the adults.
- (b) Two written validated references from reputable sources for two of the adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all four staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4)

Four of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) therefore at that reference number is satisfied

Compliance Information

- (1)
On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.
- (3)
The ratio of adults to children was maintained on the day of the inspection. There were eleven children attending the service being supervised directly by four of adults and the registered provider.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

A registered provider shall ensure that all reasonable measures are taken to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of a pre-school child attending the service and that the environment of the service is safe.

Compliance Information

General Safety:

- The main entrance was found to be secured on arrival preventing unauthorised access or exit from the premises.
- Materials were observed to be in a good state of repair.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C.
- Cleaning products and equipment were stored out of the reach of children.
- The outdoor area was secured with tall wooden fencing and a bolted gate.
- Grapes were observed to be cut in half, reducing the risk of choking to the child.

Infection Control:

- There was adequate handwashing facilities were available throughout the service, equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, and paper towels.
- Thermostatically controlled warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided in the sanitary accommodation.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Children were observed washing their hands regularly, including before snacks and meals, demonstrating good hygiene practices.
- Child-friendly handwashing posters with pictorial instructions were displayed above wash basins to support children's independence and understanding.
- Foot-operated pedal bins were provided in all areas for the safe and hygienic disposal of waste.
- Cleaning schedules were in place and maintained, staff were observed cleaning the pre-school room after the children had finished their lunch.

Administration of Medication:

- When interviewed, staff were aware of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication. No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1) (a) (b)

The service demonstrated that a staff held in date First Aid Responder (FAR) training and were always available to the children while in the service.

(2) (a) (b)

A fully stocked first aid box was stored in a conspicuous location in the service and available to the children as required.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of-

(a) any fire drill that takes place in the premises, and

(b) the number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,

(b) an employee, and

(c) an authorised person.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) A procedure was in place to practice and record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated the 12th of June 2025.
- (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on file. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated 24th September 2024.
- (4) Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in a conspicuous position in the main preschool room.

Non-Compliance Information

- At the time of inspection, no documentation was available to confirm that the fire alarm system had undergone its required annual servicing.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The fire alarm systems in the building will now be serviced annually. All service documentation will be maintained on-site and made available for inspection as required.

Supporting documentation submitted

The fire alarm system has been serviced. A copy of the maintenance report has been submitted to Tusla, and documentation is available on-site for inspection.

Summary Comment

The early years inspector has assessed the documentation submitted by the register provider and deems it to meet the requirements.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

The minimum required ratio of qualified adults to children in attendance was maintained during the inspection. The staff were observed positioning themselves within sight and sound range of children in the main playroom, allowing for good supervision. The staff were observed to supervise the children when eating their meals. The outside area was designed to ensure that staff could keep children in sight and sound during play.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured adequate insurance was in place for the preschool service for 22 children up until 27 March 2025